

REMARKS

Claims 2-11 are all of the claims presently pending in this application after entry of the foregoing amendments. Claim 1 is hereby cancelled, although Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application. Claims 2-11 were examined on the merits. Claims 2-5 and 8-11 are rejected on prior art grounds, but claims 6 and 7 are indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Figs. 12, 13(a) and 13(b) are hereby labelled as prior art. The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge receipt and indicate approval of the corrected drawings submitted herewith.

Claims 2-5 and 8-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§102(a) and 102(e) as being anticipated by Fukuyo. In order to remove this reference as prior art against the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit a verified English language translation of the Japanese priority document from which the instant application claims foreign priority.

Since Fukuyo is not prior art relative to the instant application, all of the claims are believed to be allowable, and Applicants respectfully request that this application be passed to issue at the earliest possible time.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
U.S. SERIAL NO. 09/988,670

ART UNIT 2831
Q67306

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, and the accompanying verified translation of Applicants' priority document, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby earnestly solicited. If any points remain in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, she is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees (except the Issue Fee and/or the Publication Fee) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any over-payments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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